

Old Vicarage School

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

This policy applies to the whole school and is available from the School Office on request, including in an accessible format where reasonably required.

Document Details

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Responsible Area	Head of School and Safeguarding Team

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours and away from the school site and is inclusive of all staff (teaching, support and agency staff), pupils on placement, contractors, the Proprietors and volunteers working in the school.

Availability: All staff who teach or support pupils must understand and implement this policy, including during activities away from school. The Head of School ensures that relevant staff know the arrangements for identifying, supporting and reviewing pupils learning English as an additional language.

Monitoring and review:

- This document will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of School.
- This policy was reviewed in September 2026 and will next be reviewed no later than September 2027, or earlier where changes in law, guidance or school practice require it. Approval by the Head of School and Proprietors is recorded separately.

Signed:

Matthew Adshead
Proprietor

Jenny Adshead
Proprietor

Kerry Wise
Head of School

Old Vicarage School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Introduction: This policy sets out Old Vicarage School's approach to pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL). A pupil may be learning EAL where a language other than English is used or has been used at home or in the pupil's community. This does not, by itself, indicate their proficiency in English or a special educational need. Pupils bring valuable linguistic and cultural knowledge to the school. All pupils should feel safe, accepted and valued. We take a whole-school approach, celebrate diversity, challenge prejudice and value pupils' home languages.

Aims: Old Vicarage School is committed to providing appropriate teaching and resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Members of staff continually strive to raise the achievements of all of the pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language. The policy aims to raise awareness of the school's obligations and to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) and so to raise pupil achievement. Displays and resources reflect linguistic and cultural diversity wherever possible. The main aims of this Policy are to set out the strategies used to help those pupils who know little English, or who are in the process of learning English when they enter the school, to be able to:

- use English effectively and clearly for a range of audiences;
- access all aspects of the curriculum;
- raise their standard of achievement in all school subjects;
- participate in all aspects of the life of the school (including sport and extracurricular activities);
- have their cultural background acknowledged and respected by all pupils and staff;

Context: On admission and as appropriate thereafter, the school seeks information from pupils and parents about:

- the languages the pupil uses and understands, their experience of English and any communication needs;
- Pupil's previous educational experience.
- Pupil's family and biographical background.

Objectives: Pupils for whom English is an additional language can heighten awareness of other countries, cultures, religions and languages. Such pupils also help other pupils in the school realise the need to speak different languages to communicate. Furthermore, their presence helps to develop such aspects of PSHEE as the awareness of others and their needs.

Members of staff recognise that English should not replace the home language. English will be learned in addition to the language skills already learned and being developed within the language community at home. Teaching pupils for whom English is an additional language is based on the following key principles:

- Language is central to our identity.
- Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from a well-developed home language.
- Literacy in a home language enhances subsequent acquisition of EAL.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- Language develops through purposeful use across the curriculum. EAL pupils' needs are addressed through careful, targeted curriculum and lesson planning.
- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.

Teaching and learning: At Old Vicarage School, pupils access the curriculum for their year group. Teachers adapt teaching and tasks to individual language needs, including where a pupil benefits from alternative ways to demonstrate understanding.

As part of their planning teachers:

- set clear learning objectives;
- identify the language and vocabulary demands of the lesson;
- take account of the linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of the pupils;
- plan differentiated opportunities matched to the individual needs of EAL pupils;
- identify appropriate materials and resources to enable all pupils to participate in lessons;
- use visual support for lessons including posters, pictures, photographs, artefacts and demonstration where appropriate;

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- identify opportunities for collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk, and encourage and support active participation where appropriate;
- identify opportunities to focus on the cultural knowledge explicit or implicit in texts;
- identify opportunities for pupils to access ICT to facilitate and reinforce learning;

Spoken and written language is developed by:

- providing a range of opportunities for pupils to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with their peers and with adults;
- ensuring that vocabulary work covers the meanings of technical words and common key words, metaphors and idioms;
- explaining how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects;
- ensuring that talking is used to support writing when appropriate;
- using drama and role play to support learning when appropriate;
- providing a variety of writing in other languages as well as in English;
- providing a range of reading materials that highlight the different ways in which English is used;
- encouraging pupils to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another;
- building on pupils' experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so that their developing use of English, and other languages, support one another;
- using repetition and alternative phrasing to support language development;
- modelling the different uses of language;
- providing positive feedback and reinforcement of accurate usage of the language;
- using different contexts for the development of pupils' language;

Members of staff recognise that pupils will usually understand more than they can articulate and that it is important that pupils do not feel under pressure to speak until they feel confident. However, adults continue to talk to pupils with the expectation that they will respond. Pupils' non-verbal communications are responded to positively and the pupils' peers are encouraged to respond similarly.

The Head of School maintains information about pupils' languages and EAL support needs, updates it when circumstances change and shares relevant information securely with teachers who need it. On entry, teachers assess each pupil's spoken and written English as appropriate to age and stage, drawing on information from the pupil, parents and prior setting. The Head of School coordinates support and reviews it with teachers and parents. Information is recorded and handled in accordance with the school's data protection arrangements.

Special Educational Needs: EAL is not, in itself, a special educational need or disability. Where progress or other evidence suggests an additional need, teachers consider the pupil's development in all languages and seek parental and, where appropriate, specialist input. The school follows its SEND Policy and makes reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils; EAL support continues alongside any SEND provision.

Assessment: All of the pupils at Old Vicarage School are assessed regularly to ensure that they are progressing. Members of staff ensure that assessments are accessible to all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language. Staff members aim to ensure that assessment materials are not culturally biased.

Teachers monitor the progress of all pupils they teach, including progress in English and across subjects, and adjust support where needed. The Head of School oversees EAL provision and reviews assessment information and outcomes with teachers.

- All EAL pupils are entitled to assessments as required.
- Where appropriate, the school may seek advice from a relevant local authority or other specialist service, with parents involved as appropriate.
- Progress in English acquisition is assessed at appropriate intervals across listening, speaking, reading and writing, taking account of age, prior education and proficiency in other languages. Records of assessment, support and review are retained securely.

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- Staff liaise regularly about pupil progress, needs, support and next steps.
- All assessment methods are checked for cultural bias and action is taken to remove any that is identified.
- Assessment methods are reviewed for language and cultural barriers. Teachers distinguish a pupil's knowledge of a subject from their current ability to express it in English, while following the rules of any external assessment.

Key Principles of additional language acquisition

- EAL pupils are entitled to access the full curriculum and all their teachers have a responsibility for teaching English as well as other subject content.
- Access to learning requires attention to the words and meanings required for each curriculum area. Meanings and understanding cannot be assumed but must be made explicit.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home languages of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued. Pupils should be encouraged to maintain their home language and use in the school environment wherever possible.
- Although many pupils acquire the ability to communicate on a day-to-day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed and can require continuing support for up to seven years.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling correct uses of language.
- Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages.
- A clear distinction is made between EAL and SEND, while recognising that a pupil may have both.

Parent partnerships: At Old Vicarage School, members of staff strive to encourage parental involvement by:

- using clear language and, where needed, reasonable arrangements for interpretation or translation so parents can participate in discussions;
- identifying the linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of pupils and establishing contact with the wider community where possible;
- recognising and encouraging use of the first language;
- helping parents understand how they can support their children at home, especially by continuing the development of their first language;

EAL Scales

'Best fit' for recognising progress: The following stages are an internal guide to describing English development. Teachers consider listening, speaking, reading and writing separately as well as an overall description; pupils may progress at different rates in each. Stages inform teaching and support and do not determine SEND status or access to the curriculum.

EAL pupils with special educational needs: Assessment takes account of any disability or SEND and appropriate communication methods. For example, a deaf pupil's spoken English alone is not a measure of their English literacy or understanding. Teachers work with the SEND coordinator and parents to identify appropriate support.

Alignment with age-related expectations: Achievement in English curriculum assessments can inform, but does not determine, an EAL stage. Teachers consider evidence across subjects and language skills and identify any continuing support needed.

Summative Assessment: The stages outlined below are intended for summative use. They should not preclude the use of the more detailed profiling descriptors for assessing development across the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, which follow this introduction.

Stage 1 - New to English: Newly arrived pupils with no or very little English

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Stage 2 - Becoming familiar with English: Primary aged pupils may be more proficient orally – able to make themselves understood – but they still require sustained support for developing reading and writing.

Stage 3 - Becoming a confident user of English: Able to participate in most classroom activities. May sound like a native speaker but have difficulties with complex sentence constructions, academic registers, idiom and other cultural references.

Stage 4 - A fluent user of English in most social and learning contexts: These pupils will demonstrate (near) native fluency and will continue to improve according to their age.

These stages should be regarded as a continuum. They therefore represent broad bands of development. Teachers may feel that some pupils are 'between' stages or just entering or leaving a stage. Therefore, some sensitivity and a detailed knowledge of the pupil's performance across the curriculum is required when giving a 'best fit' stage.

Assessment guidance

Teachers may use suitable language development descriptors alongside classroom evidence. Historic QCA materials, if consulted, are used only as supplementary resources and are not treated as current statutory assessment requirements. www.qca.org.uk

Moderation

Staff periodically moderate EAL assessments using shared descriptors and examples of pupils' work, so that stages and support decisions are applied consistently. The Head of School reviews the outcomes and any action required.

'Best Fit' for recognising progress

The school's EAL stages provide a 'best fit' description of progress, informed by evidence across listening, speaking, reading and writing. An overall stage does not obscure skills that need further support.

EAL Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Assessment takes account of a pupil's SEND or disability and uses appropriate communication methods. Teachers work with the SEND coordinator to distinguish language acquisition from an additional need and to plan support where both are present.

Alignment with national norms

Achievement at age-related expectations may inform an overall EAL assessment, but stage decisions also take account of the pupil's language profile and any continuing support needs.

Individual language histories

Teachers ask pupils and parents about languages used at home, previous education and experience of English. They do not infer a pupil's first language, English proficiency or need for support from nationality, ethnicity, country of origin or accent.

Summative Assessment

These stages support a broad summary of progress. Teachers also use evidence about listening, speaking, reading and writing to plan teaching and review individual needs.